The Myrtle.

"INSTEAD OF THE BRIER SHALL COME UP THE MYRTLE TREE." ISA. LV. 13.

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"Is The Sermon Done."

CLOSED was the preacher's last appeal;
The worshippers were gone,
Though some still lingered here and there,
Round many a sod and stone;
When up there ran a little lad,—
"Sir, is the sermon done?"

"The preacher's words," replied the man,
"Are ended, it is true;
But those great precepts he has taught,
Demand attention too;
And so the sermon is not done.
But it is all *to do*.

"'Tis easy a short Sabbath hour,
To learn of wisdom's way—
To listen to the word of God,
And mark what preachers say;
But 'tis our duty thro' the week
To ponder and obey.

"Then will the sermon, boy, be done,
When evil is abhorred.—
God, not alone on this His day,
But every hour adored,
For piety makes every place
A temple of the Lord."

To A Child.

BY F. T. PALGRAVE.

If by any device or knowledge
The rosebud its beauty could know,
It would stay a rosebud forever,
Nor into its fulness grow.

And if thou couldst know thy own sweetness,
O little one, perfect and sweet!
Thou wouldst be child forever,
Completer whilst incomplete.

For the Myrtle.

Carrie Gale's First Disobedience.

"THIS afternoon, mother," said little Carrie Gale, "I want to go over to see Mary Lawton; I haven't been there for a long time, and her mother often asks me to come."

"I know it my dear," said Mrs. Gale, "but Mary is a little girl who is not taught to obey her mother, and I fear she may lead you into harm, if I allow you to go there so often."

"Why, mother, I haven't been there for more than two weeks, and Mrs. Lawton says she would like to have me come every day," said Carrie.

"I do not doubt it," said her mother, "but I much prefer to have you remain at home."

"I don't see why," said the child impatiently, "Grace Lowe is to be there this afternoon, and I think it is too bad if I can't go too. I will come home early, and be a real good girl, if you'll only let me go, mother."

"Well Carrie, I will let you go this afternoon, but you must be back at four o'clock, for I want you then."

"Why, mother, Grace is going to stay to tea, and Mary wanted I should," said Carrie.

"No, Carrie, I shall not let you stay so long. You must be sure to return by four o'clock, as I wish you to attend the baby, so I can finish your dress for you to wear to Sabbath School to-morrow."

Carrie had so much feared her mother would not allow her to go at all, she said no more about staying to tea, though in her heart she thought her mother was very strict not to let her do as other little girls were allowed to do. But she kissed her and the baby good bye as she started away, and again promised she would be back at four o'clock.

When she arrived at Mary's home, she found Grace already there, and the three were soon having a merry time with their dolls, and other playthings, under the large elm trees that stood in the yard, front of the house.

For more than an hour they played there in great glee, till Carrie began to think it time for her to go home, and she told the little girls she must see what time it was, for her mother had told her to be home at four.

"No, I shall not let you go so early," said Mary. "We have only just begun to have a good time, and I want you should go with us to the pond for some lilies."

O, I couldn't do that, even if I were to stay, for mother never lets me go to the pond," said Carrie.

"Now, I'd stay longer if I were you. Your mother won't care. I'll go home with you and tell her you couldn't help staying, we were having such a good time. Come now, do," said Grace.

"No," said Carrie, "I must go, for mother cannot finish my dress for to-morrow, unless I go home to help take care of the baby," and she started resolutely for the house to see what time it was.

"Is it four o'clock, Mrs. Lawton?" she asked as she neared the window by which that lady sat sewing.

"No. It wants a quarter of four," said Mrs. Lawton. "Why?"

"Because I must go home soon," said Carrie.

"What! go home as early as this! It is too bad! I don't believe your mother will care if you stay longer. Why, you haven't but just begun to enjoy yourselves," said Mrs. Lawton.

"I know it," chimed in both the other girls, and I wish she could stay as long as I do," said Grace Lowe.

"Come Carrie," said Mrs. Lawton, "I will give you leave to stay, and your mother will not care, I'm sure. You don't come very often, and I think there will be no harm in your staying a little longer.

Carrie hesitated for some time, but gave her consent to stay till five o'clock, asking Mrs. Lawton to be sure to tell her when that time came. Mrs. Lawton promised, and the little girls returned to their play.

But for Carrie all pleasure was gone. In vain did she try to make herself think she was enjoying her play as before, it was not possible.

At last Mary said to Grace, "Come, let's play something else, for Carrie is getting tired of dolls."

"So I say," said Grace. "Let's go down to the swing in the grove."

"That will be nice," said the others, and away they started for the swing. Mrs. Lawton saw them go off in that direction, but as Mary was in the habit of going there often, she thought no more about it.

The swing was a large and high one, and the little girls soon tired of pushing one another, so that amusement was given up, and they wandered off in quest of flowers. For a long time they kept on, and each had her apron full when they came in sight of the pond where the water-lilies were growing.

"O, let's get some of those beautiful lilies," said Mary.

"Yes," said Grace. "Won't they be nice to take home to our mothers!"

"Come Carrie," said Mary, for the little girl had drawn back at the thought of getting the lilies, her mother had so often said it was dangerous for her even to attempt to gather, unless her father was with her.

"I'm afraid you'll be drowned," she said. "My mother says there is great danger."

"Your mother is never willing you should have any fun," said Mary, "for my part, I shall get some lilies. Shan't you, Grace?"

"Yes, I shall," said Grace. "I know my mother will not care, and I can be careful.

By this time, the children had reached the edge of the pond, and the lilies shone out in all their glory just before them, though too far from the edge for them to reach.

"Let's take off our stockings and shoes, and get them that way."

"No," said Mary, "you wait a minute. Tom

Sawyer's boat is tied just the other side of that point, and we'll get into that, and go after them."

"I shouldn't dare to," said Carrie. "We cannot row."

"Yes, I can," said Mary. "The last time I came out with father, he let me row all the way, and said I was quite a good rower."

"I'm not a bit afraid," said Grace, "come, Carrie. We'll have a nice row, and get lots of lilies."

By this time, Carrie had gone so far in disobedience, she felt there could be no harm in going a little farther, so she followed the girls around the narrow point of land that hid the boat from their sight, and helped to untie the various knots in the rope that secured it to the shore.

When the boat was loosed, Mary took the oars as she had seen Mr. Sawyer and her father do, and telling the girls to jump in, she proceeded to push the boat off in quite a scientific manner. But for some time her efforts were not successful, and she began to think they would have to give up their ride, when a more vigorous push than before, loosed the boat from the pebbly shore, and nearly threw her overboard, but she soon collected herself, and plied away at the oars with considerable skill. In a little while they rounded the point, and once more the beautiful lilies greeted their eyes.

They soon reached them, and were all anxiously endeavoring to get as many as possible, without any thought or care as to the position of the boat, when by an unlucky chance, one of them made a sudden move for the side of the boat where the others were already reachirg out at arms length, and in an instant the frail craft was overturned, and all three of the little girls were in the water.

Scream followed scream, as long as they could keep themselves out of the water by clinging to the lily pads. But at last, one after the other, they sank down, down under the blue waters.

But there was hope! Mr. Sawyer, the owner of the boat, had heard cries in that direction, as he was going toward the pond for a short row before dark, and he hastened with all his speed to the spot where his boat was usually anchored. Finding it gone, he ran around the point, thinking it probable some one had taken it to go in search of lilies. Judge of his surprise when he found it empty, and no one in sight. Knowing the rider or riders must have gone down, he at once plunged in to save them if possible.

The water was not deep, though the long, tough stems of the lilies prevented his making much headway, and held the boat almost motionless where it had overturned. But a moment passed, when he caught sight of Grace's dress, as she came slowly to the surface the first time. He soon had her out of water and in the bottom of the boat, while he watched for the others, for he had seen the little girls at play in Mr, Lawton's yard, and thought it very probable the three were there.

He had not long to wait, for very soon Mary and Carrie came to the surface, and catching them by their clothing, he waded to the shore with his heavy burden, then returned to the boat for Grace.

He found it quite a task to attend to the three, but as no help was near, he was obliged to do so. It was some time before they were sufficiently recovered for him to leave them, and go to Mr. Lawton's house for a conveyance. He found Mr. Gale there, inquiring for his little daughter, whose mother had become much alarmed at her long stay. He accompanied Mrs. Lawton and Mr. Sawyer when they went for the children, and a sad sight it was to see them lying there so pale and helpless. They each took one in their arms and rode slowly home, all thanking God the children had been saved.

Mr. Sawyer took Grace to her home, and she soon recovered from her fright, and went to school again the next week, but it was not so with Carrie or Mary. They were both sick with fever, and long weeks passed before they returned to school.

Mrs. Lawton begged Mrs. Gale's forgiveness many times over, for urging Carrie to disobey her, and told her if Mary ever recovered she should try and be a different mother to her. Mary did recover, and her mother kept her word, for a more faithful mother than Mrs. Lawton, can hardly be found.

Carrie was so much ashamed of her naughty conduct, that she never forgot the lesson in her life, and often told her little brother when he was older the story of the punishment she received for her first and last disobedience.

Inez.

Gather sunshine about you instead of clouds.

Two Proverbs.

"Never cry about what you can't help." So rang out the cheery voice of Nelly Granger, as she trotted down the lane, milk can in hand.

And what made her say it was the sight of a little boy standing in the middle of the lane and crying with a loud boo-hoo, and with both fists in his eyes. "What can be the matter with that cry-baby now?" thought Nellie, as she recognized in the chubby boy her neighbor Sammy Brown.

Nellie soon saw the trouble — a big market basket overturned, with half its contents spilled out on the ground. It was then that she sang out in tones half of encouragement and half of ridicule — "Never cry for what you can't help."

But Sammy only boo-hooed the louder as she drew near. "I guess you'd cry if you'd spilled all your dinner," he sobbed.

"Guess I shouldn't," said Nellie. "What would be the good? It wouldn't pick it up again, would it?" Then Nelly looked down at the basket and burst into a merry laugh.

"Three apples rolled out and the meat all done up in a napkin!" said she. "What a *dreadful* thing to cry about. I'll give you another one, Sammy, and just listen to this with all your ears."

"Never cry about what you CAN help."

"You could have picked them up a dozen times while you've stood here crying over them."

Sammy stopped crying and looked up at her, wiping his eyes with his fist.

"If I don't cry 'bout what I can't help, and don't cry 'bout what I *can* help, I don't see how I'm goin' to cry at all," said he.

Nellie laughed merrier than before. "No, it don't leave much chance," said she, "but I don't believe you'd die if you shouldn't cry for three weeks. You just try it; and begin just now by picking up your basket and trudging on, like a little man."

So saying, Nellie gathered up the apples and put them in Sammy's hands to put into the basket. She would not pick it up for him, but she helped him put it all to rights, and he found it was a great deal easier than sitting in the sun and crying because the things would not pick themselves up.

Sammy learned a lesson that morning he did not soon forget. Ever after when things vexed him and he was tempted to give up and be a cry baby, he used to help himself over it by Nellie's two proverbs,—

Never cry about what you can't help; and Never cry about what you *can* help.

George. — Kitty! Where are you?"

Kitty. — Here I are, George!"

George. — Don't say 'Here you *are*,' say, 'Here you *am*,' when you're speaking of yourself."

A GRAIN of sand is a part of the earth, a drop of water is a part of the ocean, but a thousand years is no part of eternity.

Talks About the Birds.

"The honey-bees hum in the clover,
The grasses rise and fall,
The robin stops and listens,
As he hears the brown thrush call.

AND well he may! For although robin belongs to the thrush tribe, there are others of this large family who are sweeter singers than he. The thrushes "stand at the head" of all the singers of the woods. They are the flute-pipes in the music of these vast orchestras of the forest. They gladden many ears, and delight and soften and soothe many hearts with their delicious melody. Of all the songs you hear in earliest morn, or at the more quiet noontime, or when the sun is sending out its "farewell beams" in the West, none are more grateful and delighting than the wood and the hermit thrushes. They seem to spiritualize and make more ethereal all the rich and sweet anthems that are poured forth from the musical throats of these forest choirs. I am a debtor, and shall be so long as I can be grateful for earthly enjoyments, to these glorious songsters.

I remember how in other days, when I was a student far up amid the hills of New Hampshire, I had my summer study in the open air, on the edge of a mountain cliff, with large groves of maples behind me. I had an outlook of many miles down the valley of Baker's River, and music all the time I spent there, from the bird-throngs that made glad the hills and valleys with their unceasing strains. Some of the books I read there are still on my shelves, and when I take them down and open them, it seems as though I was breathing again the fresh air of the mountains, and saw the green valley stretching

away in the distance, and heard the bird melodies all around me. And most delightful among these melodies were the flute-like songs of the wood and the hermit thrushes. It seemed as though they sang a little sweeter there than I have since heard others of their tribe elsewhere in the lower places of their assembling; the air was so clear, and there was such stillness, and such a charming echo to their songs!

"Don't them flute-birds sing the sweetest, though?" said an honest rustic one day to me, as I was coming down from my mountain retreat. He had heard and enjoyed them as he was busy at work in the field below. I valued his opinion, and knew that he had "music in his soul." How I love to live over again those morning exercises in that mountain cathedral of natue's own rearing!

The wood thrush is found in the Eastern United States to the Missouri River, and south to Gautemala. The hermit or solitary thrush is a smaller bird. It is found usually where the wood thrush is, but its song is sweeter and more plaintive. The olive-back thrush is a larger bird, and flies farther north than the others just named. There is also a still larger one called the thrasher. It is found in both northern and southern States, but more usually at the South. Its song is loud, varied and melodious. It is a bold and powerful bird, and will chase cats, dogs, foxes, hawks, or whatever intruders may come near its nest. It is equal to the king-bird in defending itself.

Many of our birds are flutists, pipers and fifers. The partridge is a drummer. He is one of the larger birds of the woods, a kind of forest-hen. His true family name is grouse, and *his* name is ruffled grouse. He is often seen by strollers in the woods, all over New England, oftenest in most retired places, where he appears exceedingly tame, if his retreats have not been much disturbed by sportsmen. The partridge appears in New England about the first of May. The hen builds its nest in a retired spot, usually beneath a thicket of evergreen or a bunch of brush, or perhaps a fallen log, or rock. The nest is loosely made, a dozen eggs or so are deposited therein, and in due time the chickens are abroad with the anxious mother, seeking their living.

Early in the spring, the male bird begins drumming, a habit peculiar to the species. The sound is often heard by those who have listening ears. The drumming is done thus: the bird resorts to a fallen trunk or log, against which he beats the tips of his wings with much force. This violent motion produces a hollow, drum ming noise, which may be heard at quite a distance. It commences very slowly, and after a few strokes, gradually increases in velocity, and terminates with a rolling beat very similar to that of a drum.

When the hen with her chicks is surprised, she quickly gives a warning cluck, when the whole brood adroitly secrete themselves. They often disappear as if by magic, under the leaves or grass, puzzling the searcher to find them out. The hens often defend their young bravely if they are in danger. In the winter time these birds often dive into the deep snow to pass the night, in coldest weather. The snow covering affords them a warm protection. But if it rains through the night, and then the weather changes to freezing, the poor prisoner dies beneath the crust that forms on the surface of the snow. Sometimes, however, while thus covered with the snow when it is not too deep, the partridge hears footsteps approaching, he will suddenly burst out of his confinement, and scattering the snowflakes in all directions, go humming away like a small bombshell through the woods. He seems to enjoy winter weather.

Speaking of the drummer, the grouse, calls to mind another bird noted for a peculiar signal of his arrival, which he gives in the early springtime. It is the Yellow-hammer. I remember him as one of the first of my early acquaintances. Going to school, I used to pass, for two or three seasons, a nest of these birds made in a small earthern jar, which had been fixed lengthwise in the limbs of a tree in a garden, for their especial accommodation. They frequently build in decayed trees. They are very social in their habits, frolicking and chattering in and about their homes. They derive their name from their spring salutation of which I have spoken. It is made by their long and resonant hammerings with their bills upon some dry limb or stub.

Among the small songsters, the wren holds a conspicuous place. One of the family has been long distinguished in the "History of Cock Robin," with which most American children are familiar. The wrens come north in early Spring. They are among the earliest seen in the evergreen woods of New England and New York. Later they come to the orchards and the oak, elm and maple trees. They are rapid movers,

and are constantly busy darting about amongst the small twigs and searching in all directions for the smallest flying insects. They soon afterwards depart for the North, to rear their young in Canada and Labrador. In October they are with us again, in pursuit of food in our woods and orchards.

The principal species of wrens in North America are, the Ruby Crowned and the Golden Crests. Of the wrens in North America, the largest is the Great Carolina, a dweller at the South. The long billed marsh wren goes as far north as Greenland. The best known species is the house wren. It is a superior songster. It builds near houses, and in boxes prepared for it; and sometimes in unused carriages, or in old coats and hats that have been a long time undisturbed in out-houses. The males are very pugnacious, attacking and driving off birds twice their size, if troubled by them. They are particularly hostile to cats, and to swallows, and martins, often taking the boxes occupied by these birds, for their nests. There are also the wood wren and the winter wren. The last named is a charming singer, and is said by Mr. Audubon, the great ornithologist, to have the sweetest song of any bird of its size, a song all the more pleasing often as it comes from the gloomy swamps and dark woods in which the bird delights to dwell.

The wren may be quite abundant in one town, and in another perhaps five miles off, not one will be found. In Cambridge, Massachusetts, it is one of the most abundant of birds, but in Newton or Dorchester it is comparatively rare. It is not easy to account for the fact only on the supposition that some species of insects which are favorites with it for food, may possibly be found less abundantly in some localities than others.

Wherever we look, these revelations of bird-life are full of interest. What a variety of them is spread over the earth, and how musical and lively they make it almost every where! In no department of nature does the Heavenly Providence make himself more manifest than in the birds of the air. How emphatic the words of Jesus: "They sow not, neither do they reap nor gather into barns; yet your Heavealy Father feedeth them. Are ye not much better than they?" What a lesson is there for us all in this question! If he cares for us as for the tiniest bird that flies, what gratitude of heart are we bound to render him? *Rev. J. G. Adams.*

Our Sunday Schools.

MASSACHUSETTS.

A very pleasant time was enjoyed by the Sunday School in North Bridgewater, in connection with the parish, on the return of their pastor, Rev. I. M. Atwood, from a three months absence on account of illness. During his absence, the school had procured a fine picture of the pastor for the vestry of the new church; and they arranged to have the presentation of this to the vestry, and the welcome home to the pastor and wife as a double surprise to him on the evening of his return.

The vestry was beautifully decorated with flowers and illuminated to its utmost. In the centre of the stage was the picture in the midst of a pyramid of flowers; and the stage was filled with the children of the Sunday School looking like flowers themselves with their pretty white dresses and garlanded heads. In the centre of the room was a beautiful arch of flowers with the word "Welcome" as its keystone. From each gas-bracket depended baskets of flowers; at the farthest end of the room a table was laid with bountiful refreshments, and on every side, the room was filled with members of the parish, all happy and expect, ant. When all was ready, a friend stepped over to the pastor's house and invited himself and wife who had arrived three hours before, to the vestry "to meet a few friends." At the door they were met by a committee of four little girls, two of whom took their wrappings, while the other two took a hand of each and led them forward beneath the arch in the centre. At the same moment the school burst forth in a beautiful song of welcome. It was a most affecting moment for all present.

After the "welcome song," a young girl very prettily gave an address of welcome, and then the pastor responded to her and the school and all the friends in a graceful and feeling manner. The school came forward and each member took them by the hand. Then there were speeches from Revs. Benton Smith, H. C. Leonard and Rev. A. St. John Chambre, after which the evening was devoted to greetings, refreshments and music.

The friends were as anxious to make the evening "go off well" as if it had been fireworks, and it was certainly as great a surprise and as complete a success as they could have desired. It was a beautiful occasion,—a delightful "coming home" to pastor and people.

MICHIGAN.

A Meeting of the Michigan Sabbath School Convention was holden at Lansing, on Monday, Aug. 21st. The meeting seems to have been preparatory to another, to be holden in connection with the State Convention. It was full of business, but little time being given to general talking. In the afternoon a short time was given to discussing the methods of Sabbath School Instruction, and in the evening several speakers discoursed on "The place of the Sunday School in religious work."

Resolutions were adopted commending greater interest on the part of pastors, teachers' meetings, thorough organization singing and Sunday School concerts, all as means of the greater efficiency of our schools.

Life of the Saviour.

LESSON LIII.

THE HEALING OF THE DEAF AND DUMB MAN.

"Neither shall any man hear his voice in the street."

SCRIPTURE, — Mark vii. 31–35.

Question. — Where did Jesus go when he left Tyre and Sidon?

Answer. — Mark vii. 31.

Q. — Through what country did he pass in going there?

A. — Mark vii. 31.

NOTE. Decapolis is composed of two words which signify ten cities; and some writers have named the ten cities situated within the country bearing that name. Being near to Tyre and Sidon, it was more a Gentile than a Jewish section of country.

Q. — Whom did the people bring to Jesus to be healed by his miraculous power?

A. — Mark vii. 32.

Q. — What earnest request did they make of Jesus?

A. — Mark vii. 32.

Q. — Did Jesus work a miracle for him in the midst of the multitude?

A. — Mark vii. 33.

Q. — What did Jesus do to him?

A. — Mark vii. 33.

Q. — When he had done those things, what did he say as he looked towards heaven?

A. — Mark vii. 34.

Q. — What was the result to the deaf and dumb man?

A. — Mark vii. 35.

Q. — What did the man do in spite of Christ's charge to the contrary?

A. — Mark vii. 36.

Q. — How were the people affected by the miracle?

A. — Mark vii. 37.

Q. — Whom did they glorify?

A. — Matt. xv. 31.

NOTE. This was mainly a Gentile country, and the heathen acknowledged the superiority of the God of the chosen people.

Hidden Seed

Enigma No. 1.

I am composed of 37 letters.

My 32. 24, 21, 5, 9, 34, 18, 2, 27, was one of the lesser prophets.

My 16, 18, 23, 25, 36, 17, 11, was a disciple of Paul.

My 13, 12, was king of Basham.

My 15, 8, 26, 4, 6, 7, 22, 10, 14, 23, 11, is a book in the Old Testament.

My 33, 29, 7, 18, 1, 31, was possessed by the descendants of Ham.

My 30, 9, 27, 37, 33, 3, was a prophet.

My 20, 18, 15, 35, 28, 19, refused to be king of Israel.

My whole was what Nathaniel said to Philip when told Jesus had come.

Bessie P.

Enigma No. 2.

A man whose wife in vain did try
To cause him to "curse God and die;"
A land wherein God caused to grow
A garden fair, and streams to flow:
One who the scattered wheat to glean,
Behind the reapers oft was seen:
One from whom David took his wife:
One trained to God from early life:
King David's much beloved son:
A Mount that cedars grew upon:
Who went to heaven, but did not die:
For whom was built a gallows high.
My whole the city's name will tell,
Where that wise counsellor did dwell.
To whom the Queen of Sheba came
To test the truth of his great fame.

H. H. D.

Answers.

SEPT. 9. Tongue; Heaven; Elymas; Gentiles; Obed; Olivet; Daniel; Saviour; Enemies; Evil; Dagon; Idolatry; Sin; Truth; Holiness; Eternal life; Water; Othniel; Righteousness; David; Order; Felix; God; Obedience; Duty. The Good Seed is the Word of God.

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